



# VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY

## Annual Review

### 2009-10

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VCH would not exist without the commitment and support of VCH Board of Directors and our funders

## TRUSTEES

Great appreciation to the following board of directors that served the organisation in 2009/2010:

- Eric Smart (Chair)
- Mark Kass
- Mandeep Hothi
- Kathryn Packer
- Mashfiqul Alam
- Dr Mayank Bhalla
- Yvette Cuff (resigned 13 July 2009)
- Ebony Skerritt (resigned 11 November 2009)
- Shamanth Paramasibam (appointed 11 November 2009, resigned 10 February 2010)
- [David Gow (appointed 30 April 2010)]

## FUNDERS

To our funders 2009/2010, we thank you for your constant encouragement and support:

- City and Hackney NHS PCT
- BBC Children in Need
- London Borough of Hackney
- Team Hackney
- The City Bridge Trust
- Lloyds TSB Foundation
- Links Foundation

Your support and service have positioned VCH for greatness as the Volunteer Centre for Hackney and enabled us to provided an effective and efficient service to our customers.



Some of the VCH Team



## MESSAGE FROM

### VCH Managing Director Bisi Ojuri

WOW! What a year, 2009/2010 has been a blissful year for us, as we finished the year in style by closing another door in the life of the organisation and unveiled a new identity by ushering in a new name in new premises. Over the year many volunteers and members of staff have passed through the organisation, making a big impact in our services and a big contribution to where we are now; we say thank you to Yvonne Farrell, Gamo Leudjou, Charli Faux Campbell, Conrad Edwards, Robert Obinkwo, Navina Boodhoo, Rhasan Brunner, Paula Graham and Ebony Skerritt.

During the year we saw the launching of two supported volunteering projects for ex-offenders and the long-term unemployed. The projects built on our commitment to provide a service that builds the capacity for effective local volunteering and gives individuals skills that will better equip them for the job market.

The recognition of the impact of volunteering and the work of VCH continued to grow within key partners in the borough as Hackney developed its first Volunteering Strategy, a commitment to volunteering was enshrined in the Hackney Compact and supported by the Hackney Mayor. All of which have helped us in addressing our business plan launched in 2008.

We continue to aim for excellence as we renew our Investing in Volunteer standard and Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation, work towards achieving the Positive About Disabled People mark, while maintaining our Investor in People standard. We are always open to comments and suggestions, and your feedbacks to us is that you want more varied volunteering opportunities and you want to be able to find our premises easily. We have taken this feedback on board as we increase our resources to recruit more Volunteer Involving Organisations and we are looking at ways to develop clear signposting.

As our partner you have made all that possible through your continuous support and encouragement. We will however, be relying more on that support in this hard time to see us through the coming year and to ensure an excellent future.

Volunteer Centre Hackney (VCH) is an infrastructure organisation with focus on volunteering. As the volunteer centre in Hackney, VCH carries out the core functions of infrastructure support as defined by Volunteering England. We provide a central access point for people to find out about local volunteering opportunities and we offer support in helping to make the local voluntary sector more effective, through supporting organisations to set up and manage effective volunteer management programmes.

### VCH's VISION

To make Hackney a place of understanding and mutual respect where the culture of volunteering makes a positive impact

### VCH's MISSION STATEMENT

Volunteer Centre Hackney serves to sustain a dynamic volunteering infrastructure in Hackney by promoting;

- Best Practice
- Partnership working
- Diversity and equality with opportunity for all

# VCH TEAM

The VCH team itself is one its greatest assets, consisting of both paid staff and committed volunteers, working on our Board and supporting VCH on a daily basis. The contribution made by the volunteers alone translates to a wage-equivalent value of about £65,000 during the 2009-10 financial year (calculated on the approximate average salary for paid staff for the time our volunteers give freely to VCH).

## VCH Current And Past Volunteers

Over the past year VCH has welcomed in a number of volunteers whose vast and varied knowledge and experiences have added greatly to the day to day running of the office, helping with all areas including admin, finance, IT, marketing and much much more. Shown below are a list of volunteers, most of whom are still with us:

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| Will Willock     | Trish Disbery    |
| Michael Hug      | Aly Hayward      |
| Robert Obinkwo   | Conrad Edwards   |
| Murani Oloto     | Gloria Burke     |
| Bola Lawson      | Ana Sanchez      |
| Len Edwards      | Maria Hovi       |
| David Richardson | Laura Volpe      |
| Millie Brown     | Sam Bedford      |
| Alan Rees        | Navina Boodhoo   |
| Clive Linturn    | Katie Fillingham |
| Rhasan Brunner   | Thomas Primus    |
| Yvonne Farrell   | Martha Boadi     |
| Gamo Leudjou     | Steven Champion  |
| Patricia Davies  |                  |



Trish Disbery,  
Volunteer Service Coordinator

## Why I Volunteered for VCH

“After being a stay at home mum for 14 years, entering the world of work was very daunting. I started volunteering to develop new skills and abilities and to enhance my employment prospects. I was amazed at the sense of achievement I gained from volunteering. The team I work with are very supportive and my line manager is always right behind me encouraging me to develop in my learning. Since I started volunteering I have never looked back and I can honestly say that it is the best decision I have ever made, as I have recently gained paid employment and could not have done it without my volunteering experience.”

**8,350** the number of volunteers who in the past 7 years have registered and been referred for volunteering by VCH and **3,013** of these were aged under **25**

**1,264** volunteers were registered and referred during 2009-10, and **213** volunteers came along for a second interview often to find an additional placement and **177** of these were successfully placed.

We successfully ran **11** courses, involving **92** attendees from **74** different organisations

In the last year **177** Hackney organisations advertised **127** volunteering opportunities through VCH.

## So who's who?



Bisi Ojuri –  
Managing Director



Tanya Turner -  
Quality and  
Development Manager



Celosia Mendes  
– PROPS Project  
Manager



Laura Volpe –  
Volunteer Referral  
Assistant



Patricia Davies –  
Volunteer Referral  
Assistant



Ana Sanchez -  
Volunteer Receptionist



Alan Rees -  
Volunteer Referral  
Assistant



Gloria Burke -  
Volunteer Referral  
Assistant



Nike Malomo -  
Mentoring Officer



Murani - Volunteer  
ICT Support



Trish Disbrey -  
Volunteer Service Co-  
ordinator



Janice Ferris -  
Volunteering and  
Outreach Coordinator



Rachael Busingye -  
Employment Advice  
Officer



Will Willock -  
Volunteer Referral  
Assistant

## OUR LAUNCH

VCH has over **350** registered organisations. **75** of these organisations registered last year.

This year we held **4** volunteer managers forums, with attendance ranging from **6 - 10**.

Last year we set the massive target of getting **80** new youth volunteers registered.

By year end this figure topped **118** new recruits!

In 2008, **22%** of Hackney's adult population was regular volunteers. (The London average of 20%, although slightly below the national average of 23%) Working with partners, we are aiming to increase the level of volunteering in Hackney by **4%** by 2012 to **26%**.



Volunteer Centre Hackney's official launch took place at our new offices in Tyssen Street on Tuesday 1st June 2010. Although the weather outside was miserable, the atmosphere inside was vibrant and exciting. In attendance were a mixture of Hackney based organisations and individuals, VCH staff, volunteers, trustees, friends and family.

We were also pleased to have in attendance the Mayor of Hackney, Jules Pipe, who gave a fantastic account of the impact that volunteering has and is making in the borough of Hackney. Other speeches were made by Charlie Forman, director of Hackney's 2012 Unit, Mark Kass (VCH Trustee) who spoke about VCH's plans for the upcoming Olympics, and VCH Board Chair Eric Smart.

We also had three heart warming accounts from Hackney volunteers who shared with us the impact that volunteering has made in their own lives.

One of the highlights of the day was the cutting of our cake (pictured below) which showcased our new strap line 'Giving is Receiving' which means that volunteering benefits not just the recipients but the volunteer as well.

A big thank you to all who came along and made our launch a great and memorable event. VCH looks forward to many more great years of working within the community to make volunteering a force to be reckoned with.



# SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING

## Employability Pathways Project

The Pathways project is a new initiative provided by VCH; it is funded by Team Hackney and is aimed at promoting volunteering to Hackney residents who have been unemployed for at least 3 months as a route towards employment by enhancing and developing their skills.

The project aims to work with 100 unemployed people living in the borough to address a deficit of practical work experience and soft/hard skills, using volunteering placements as the vehicle. Each Pathways Volunteer is supported to become 'job ready' by receiving the opportunity to develop soft skills/work related skills whilst on a voluntary placement. Candidates are given advice, information and guidance sessions after registration. These sessions identify their individual goals, aspirations and skills base, and culminate in an action plan for their pathways journey.

When a placement is found the candidate is supported in applying for the opportunity and preparing for and attending the interview. When the volunteer is invited to start the placement we will provide a bursary for expenses and training.



Rachael Busingye -  
Employment Advice  
Officer

Each 'Pathways Volunteer' is supported and monitored in all aspects of development. If extra needs are identified, a 'Pathways Mentor' will be allocated to enhance and support the journey. 30 Mentors will be recruited and trained to give one to one guidance to Pathways volunteers. 25 Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) will also benefit from the Pathways project, as they will be supported in identifying placements and coached in best practice volunteer management.

## In Shape Volunteering

In Shape is the Healthy Living Partnership for Hackney's over 50s, made up of a partnership of seven charities working in the borough to improve the health and wellbeing of people in this age group. The partner organisations include: Age Concern Hackney, Asian Women's Advisory Service, Hoxton Health Group, The Sharp End (lead partner), Stop Falls Network, The Stroke Project (TLC) and Wayside Community Centre.

The aim of the project is to work with partner organisations in developing volunteering opportunities and recruiting suitable volunteers to fill these roles. Part of the project was to work with the City of London, helping to provide opportunities for their staff members taking part in their own employee volunteering scheme.

Notable achievements included the success of our Bollywood themed Christmas party '09 which was attended by over 80 people, both service users and volunteers.



## ICT PROJECT

### East London Sub-region

VCH continued to provide leadership in partnership working and developing new services for the voluntary sector. We were the representative Hackney body at the East London Network (ELN) and took the lead on improving the capacity of voluntary and community groups to use and manage their ICT (Information and Communication Technology).

The ICT Project was part of a London-wide Change Up initiative co-ordinated by London Advice Services Alliance (LASA) aiming to build the capacity of the VCOs by promoting and supporting good practice and sound management of sustainable IT resources.

We worked with 73 organisations providing strategic advice, practical support and training. Half of the organizations have a Black and Ethnic Minority and Refugees background (BMER). This project was funded by The City Bridge Trust until November 2009 and was then handed over to the East London Network of CVSSs.

## PROPS - Mental Health Project funded by Hackney PCT



Celosia Mendes – PROPS  
Project Manager

The PROPS Mental Health project started last year and has really worked well. This programme so far has offered support and help to people with severe and enduring as well as mild and moderate mental health issues. We have aimed to bridge the gap between such people and the wider community by securing voluntary placements for our clients as well as educating employers regarding the stigmas that surround mental health.

It has enabled service users and local community/voluntary organisations to recognise and make use of the valuable skills and abilities that people with mental health issues have to offer the community. Volunteers have been able to improve their self-esteem and skills and been able to contribute to their community; this gives them the opportunity to value themselves more highly through their work and contributions.

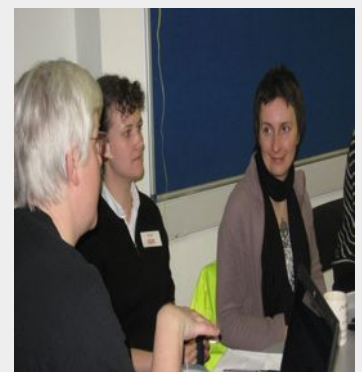
‘Talking to someone at VCH made me feel more worthwhile than I did after hours of counselling’ Kim Parker

The aim of the project is to promote, support, train and offer advice on volunteering for people with mental health issues in Hackney. This has been achieved in the past year through constructive partnership with various bodies in Hackney. We have proven to be a pivotal point of reference for many mental health based organisations and have forged strong links with them. VCH looks forward to strengthening and developing the project in the upcoming second year.

## Best Practice Project

### support to Volunteer Involving Organisations

This programme is funded by Team Hackney, as part of their commitment to volunteering in the Local Area Agreement. The initial funding began in the last financial year and lasted until May 2009. This part of the project identified 30 VIOs and paid for their registration with Investing in Volunteers, the quality standard for volunteer management and then supported them in achieving the standard. As many of the groups needed on-going support subsequent funding was received in August; this money enabled us to continue to offer training and one-to-one support to these groups and to develop sample volunteering documents to go on the website. In addition, this project supports a number of small groups to begin the journey towards implementing good volunteer management.



## PROPS - Ex-Offenders Project funded by Lloyds TSB

The PROPS Ex-offenders project started in July 2009 and already has had many referrals. The project offers Opportunity and Access for All – by engaging with disadvantaged people in the criminal justice system and offering them pathways out of crime, through volunteering with accredited training. Ongoing support and mentoring will improve their chances in life – with better access to training and through development of their skills, both soft and basic. Volunteers will also gain work-related skills such as ICT and administration and mentoring. We also aim to recruit volunteers who are former/current service users to help other beneficiaries and create a ‘buddy program’.

‘I started off on the wrong foot being done for stealing a bicycle. I thought no one would give me a chance as I wanted to work with repairing bikes and that was my conviction. VCH not only found me a placement, they took me to the interview and ensured I was OK. Now I am volunteering with trained bike mechanics at Skyways.’ Daniel Morrison

We have created volunteering opportunities specifically for ex-offenders. In the past ex-offenders wanting to volunteer have felt discouraged and not willing to apply for volunteering roles where a CRB check is required. We have created roles with employers such as the LAARC and Lea Valley for ex-offenders wanting to turn over a new leaf. There has been a steady influx of referrals from organisations such as the Hackney Probation services, The Diamond Initiative program, which is directly linked with the Home Office, the local Police Station and various training providers that work with ex-offenders.

The ongoing aims of the project are to improve the quality of life for people who have served both custodial and non-custodial sentences; to help them build a life without crime; to encourage them to play a more productive role by engaging positively with community organisations and therefore to integrate them back into their local society. In the past year the project has transformed from an idea to a fully-fledged project with great potential.

## Youth Volunteering - funded by BBC Children in Need

The Young Volunteers project was funded by BBC Children in Need until 30 June 2010 and aims to encourage 13-19 year-olds to become more involved in their communities and develop new skills through volunteering.



The project works closely with local voluntary and community sector organisations to offer young volunteers interesting and fun placements. Our core aim of getting more young people involved in volunteering came to fruition during 2009. At the beginning of the last financial year, we set a massive goal of getting 80 new volunteers registered. However, by year-end this figure topped 118 recruits!

Much of this success can be attributed to a marked increase in outreach services—talking to young people in schools, colleges and at local events, whilst building strong networks through teachers and youth groups to gain referrals.

It is our continued belief that youth volunteering provides not only a wonderful opportunity for young people to learn new skills; it also promotes a real sense of social inclusion within their own communities.

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total 2009 (£)	Totals 2008 (£)
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
<i>Incoming resources from generated funds:</i>				
Voluntary income				
Donations, legacies and similar incoming resources	-	-	-	-
Investment income	1,330	-	1,330	3,689
	1,330	-	1,330	3,689
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>				
Grants receivable	-	288,261	288,261	340,703
Training course fees	645	-	645	760
Membership fees	-	-	-	763
Other income	1,862	-	1,862	3,056
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>3,837</b>	<b>288,261</b>	<b>292,098</b>	<b>348,971</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Charitable activities	63	280,604	280,667	347,078
Governance costs	-	7,435	7,435	7,493
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>288,039</b>	<b>288,102</b>	<b>354,571</b>
<b>Net (resources expended)/ incoming resources</b>	<b>3,774</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>3,996</b>	<b>(5,600)</b>
<b>Total Funds at 1 April 2009</b>	<b>131,643</b>	<b>8,859</b>	<b>140,502</b>	<b>146,102</b>
<b>Total Funds at 31 March 2010</b>	<b>135,417</b>	<b>9,081</b>	<b>144,498</b>	<b>140,502</b>

The statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year

The net incoming resources for the year arise from the Charity's continuing operations

## BALANCE SHEET at 31 March 2010

		2010 (£)		2009 (£)
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Tangible assets		8,040		93
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Debtors	35,426		59,885	
Cash at bank and in hand	160,063		167,491	
	195,489		227,376	
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	(59,031)		(86,967)	
<b>Net Current Asset</b>		136,458		140,409
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>		144,498		140,502
<b>Funds</b>				
Unrestricted Funds		135,417		131,643
Restricted Funds		9,081		8,859
<b>Total Funds</b>		144,498		140,502

### Auditors Note

We have audited the financial statements of Hackney Agency for Volunteering for the year ended 31 March 2010.



Auditors: Moore Stephens LLP, 57 London Road, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 6SW

Bankers: HSBC, 283 Mare Street, London E8 1PJ  
CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling,  
Kent, ME19 4JQ

Secretary: Olabisi Ojuri (Company Secretary)

Principle Officer: Olabisi Ojuri (Managing Director)

Registered Charity no. 1068104.  
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